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PEFFLEY'S

# DESERT SANDS

POEMS.

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# DESERT SANDS:

SELECTED POEMS

of

*and*  
D. Frank Peffley.  
*and*

1899.

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE.

This small collection of verses has been made more with a view to the preservation of the productions of my pen than for any other purpose; but a limited edition is modestly placed before the public as a perhaps little-worthy contribution to the literature of the West. The book is the slow growth of years, the poems having been written in a disconnected way, as the muse moved me in the midst of a life of plodding, wearing work, and have not had as careful revision as should have been given them before they were published.

They have been printed under disadvantages as to proof-reading, as is painfully evident in several places; but as the errors will be obvious to the intelligent reader I will not call attention to them specifically. I regret to have to ask the indulgence of my friends, for whom this edition is principally intended, on this point.

I hope the volume may not seem to be entirely without excuse for its appearance.

D. FRANK PEFFLEY.

Indianola, Iowa, May 5th, 1899.





## REVELATION—A TALE OF CHRISTMAS.

The old year drew near to his passing,  
Drew near as an age-bended Pilgrim  
Who sees with dim eyes just before him  
Rise the shrine he has life-long been seeking  
Thro' fields that were radiant and fragrant,  
Thro' fields golden-bright with their harvests,  
Thro' fields resting 'neath the brown stubble,  
Thro' fields that were barren and cheerless,  
And joyfully yields up the spirit;  
For his feet have accomplished the journey  
That has been his sole mission in living.

---

Two homes stood beside a worn highway  
Where the feet of the dead and the living  
Had trod the red soil into atoms,  
And the winds and the rains had removed them.  
Their doorways stood facing each other,

And their windows looked down on the trav'lers  
Who constantly eastward or westward  
Fared in unending procession,  
The old faces gradually going  
And leaving their places to new ones.  
On the one hand the glow of the wood-fire  
Was ruddy and cheerful as childhood  
As it shone thro' the old-fashioned casements,  
Illuming the face of the passer  
Who glanced as he hurried on homeward  
At the happiness it was a part of.  
Within there dwelt three generations.  
The grand-parents, on whose thin temples  
The snows of their seventy winters—  
Snows the warmth of this world cannot soften—  
Lay white as on Andean summits,  
Sat on opposite sides of the hearth-stone.  
He smoked in contentment the clay pipe  
Which his grand-daughter filled and presented  
With a kiss and a stroke of his forehead.  
She busied her fingers with knitting,  
Or smiled at the frolicsome children

---

Who played round her soft-cushioned rocker,  
Oft pausing to ask the old questions  
She had answered their parents before them  
About Santa Claus and his reindeer,  
And how he gets down thro' the fireplace  
Without scorching the fur of his clothing.  
Careless were both; for the future  
Was bright with the bow of the promise,  
And the past had been prosp'rous and happy.  
The brows of the parents were thoughtful,  
But grateful hearts shone thro' their faces;  
For ne'er had the death-angel call'd them  
To sorrow, or ill-fortune fallen,  
But always the Good Lord had blest them  
Whatever their hands had engaged in.  
And now, when life's summer was ending,  
They rested amid what they'd gathered,  
Living only for those they had brought from  
The mystic Eterne to the Present.

But over the way there were dreary,  
Dark windows, with Want looking thro' them.  
Misfortune had long time abode there.

The father had labored while waiting,  
For the shadow he saw surely settling  
To deepen and shut the world from him.  
It had fallen; and flowers had blossomed  
One summer above him. Her sorrows  
Had broken the mother's poor spirit,  
And her frail body's strength was fast waning.  
For her eldest had died ere his father,  
Whose hope he had been for the future.  
A staff they would have still to lean on  
When he should be gone from among them.  
Yet she toiled as always a mother  
Will toil till the grave opens for her  
That the little ones left to her keeping  
Might feel not the rackings of hunger,  
But in vain. And the chill winds of winter  
Swept round them and laughed in the windows,  
And mocked when the door was thrown open  
At the want and the sorrow within it.  
The eyes of the children grew hollow;  
From their lips fled the music of laughter;  
They stood at the windows and wondered

At what their young minds saw so darkly;  
Why the width of the time-worn old highway  
Should to them be the gulf that shut Dives  
From the Beggar in Abraham's bosom.

'Twas the eve that the chorus of angels  
Sang "Good Will" o'er Judea's hilltops.  
All day the children had noted  
The stir and the glad preparation  
For the feast and the joy of the morrow,  
The surprises the young ones should wake to  
In the home with the sun-lighted portal.  
But the darkness grew thicker and chiller  
And the fatherless babes at the window  
Cried with the cold and the hunger  
That the mother could give no relief from.  
Grief burst from the wan sufferer's bosom,  
A sob she in vain strove to stifle.  
The children, hearing it, turned from  
Their watching and threw their arms round her,  
Each murmuring "Mamma, I love you,"  
And asking her why she was crying.  
She pressed them both to her heart then

And said "Because mamma loves you."  
They kissed the warm tears from her eyelids,  
Held her thin, pallid face in their cold hands,  
Kissed her again and the sadness  
Faded out of the lives of the children.  
Forgot were the cold and the hunger  
In the heart-glow of love for the moment.  
And the music of innocent prattle  
Drove away the lank wolf from the threshold.  
But the lights o'er the way flared yet brighter,  
And a shout faintly heard floated to them.  
They begged that their mother would take them,  
To look thro' the window a moment  
And see what was happiness like to.  
How could she deny them such asking?  
So wrapping them in their scant garments  
She took in her arms the two babies  
And silently crossed o'er the roadway  
And stood in the light of the casement,  
Stealing joy for the hearts of her children.  
The glow from within soon betrayed them.  
The youngest looked out thro' the window,

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Then screaming clung hard to his sister.  
Quickly she looked where he pointed  
And saw as a flash three white faces  
Turn to the darkness and vanish.  
But the flash was enough to reveal them  
To more than the eyes of the youngest;  
The father and mother had seen them.  
The vision smote into their heart-depths  
And broke up their fountains of feeling.  
With tears gushing over her eyelids,  
"Oh, Jesus!" she cried "how we blindly  
Forget thee in doing thee honor!  
How little on this thy dear birth-night  
We feel in our hearts of thy teaching!"  
"Come, wife," said her husband, arising,  
And straight they rushed into the darkness  
Where the three were seen staggering homeward  
Pierced with the frost-laden night air,  
With sobs from the little ones breaking  
As they clung in their fright to their mother.  
Then a gleam from the hallway upon them  
Fell bright as the parents ran wildly

And called them to stop. Then the mother  
Sank down on her knees in the roadway.  
"Forgive us," she cried, "but 'twas Heaven  
To these my poor babes for one moment  
To look on the scenes at your hearthside.  
It was wrong, but I beg you will pardon;  
For I shall be gone ere the Christ-night  
Again this drear world shall curtain.  
The call I have heard, and I know that  
The snows will lie lightly above me  
When Time's clock shall next strike the twelve-month  
Oh, how sweet shall I rest then!  
But these, my innocent children,  
Too young yet to know, not to suffer,"—  
Before she could conquer her feeling,  
The daughter had answered her mother  
With warmth-giving wraps, and the children  
Were borne through the doors to the hearth-stone,  
And their eyes grew wider with wonder  
At the strangers, and strange things around them.  
Protesting and sobbing, the widow  
Was borne by strong arms to the fireside



---

And placed in the father's great arm-chair.  
The babes were borne off to the wardrobe  
And dressed in the warmest of garments  
Selected from those of the youngest.  
Soon for the three was a feast spread  
Such as the little ones never  
Had tasted; the mother in long time.  
And when with the food more of color  
Had mantled their cheeks, and brighter  
The lights in their eyes had arisen,  
A chapter was read and the father  
Poured fervently forth to the Giver  
The thanks from his heart overflowing  
For the lesson they'd learned, but so slowly.  
Nor would they suffer the widow  
And babes to return to their dwelling  
So cheerless that night, nor the morrow,  
But with feasting and joy entertained them.  
So passed the winter, and spring came;  
Came to the children as happy  
And playful as lambs in the meadows;  
But with it the mother grew weaker,

---

And when from the brookside in May-time  
They brought to her fragrant wild flowers,  
She kissed the brown hands that had plucked them,  
And, soothed by their sweet exhalation,  
Whispered "Farewell" and a blessing,  
And her soul floated out from its prison.  
They buried her where she had wished them,  
By the graves of her son and her husband,  
And carved on a shaft of pale marble  
The names of the three silent sleepers.

Soon was forgotten the sorrow  
The little ones felt in her going.  
And memory was but the fragrance  
That a long withered flower leaves behind it  
In the book 'tween whose pages we pressed it.  
They strewed the three graves every May-time  
With the flowers that had softened death's pathway.  
They slowly learned more of their childhood  
And the home they had left o'er the roadway,  
With the story of that night in December,  
And the lesson it bore, and the blessing,  
As womanhood blossomed within them.

---

And sought to repay all with loving  
And serving God's poor as He taught them  
Whose birth the loud chorus of angels  
Announced with the glad song of "Good Will."

---

### DREAM-WINGED.

Once when the dewy wings of summer night  
Had closed about my spirit, weary with the toil  
That earth hath ever made its share of life below,  
And 'neath their brooding shadows I had sunk  
Into a deep and restful sleep, beside my couch  
A beauteous Dream did stand:  
A Dream more fair than mortal tongue or pen  
Can to the mind describe, or pencil's touch  
Can limn for mortal eye.  
Its face of radiant, pallid light, ethereal, pure  
Upon me smiled with solemn happiness;  
And thro' my frame no shock of terror passed,  
Nor tremor of slight fear, for in that face  
Such sweet compassion beamed as mortal face  
Ne'er wore, nay, none but His.  
No words its lips did pass; but, bending low,

Within its own my willing hand it clasped,  
And to its pulseless bosom held.  
I felt nor saw no motion; but soon I knew  
The darkling earth was shrinking in the misty space,  
And tiny stars, as seen from her, were sprung  
To blazing suns, and songs of spheres through ether  
                  whirling dizzily  
Came faintly on my ear that heard  
Most exquisitely clear.

And now I found my Dream and me beside  
A wondrous tide with surface calmer than the face  
Of childhood in the arms of healthful sleep.  
No ripple marred it, made by breeze that sped  
From shore to shore. Its only dread its silence,  
For no index of its depth was there, and clear  
As crystal tho' it lay, no eye could penetrate.  
For all the light reflected that upon it fell.  
Above it rolled a cloud as light as floats  
When June across her bluest vault unfolds  
Her fleeciery banner to her softest airs.  
But still no eye could pierce its folds, so light  
And yet so dense.

I wished that I might see beyond;  
And with the thought a momentary rift  
Broke through the cloud, and with the glimpse I caught  
My soul was filled with joy ecstatic.  
Beyond there walked, within my voice's call,  
A group of beings like my guide, my Dream,  
With fields beneath their feet like those my child-  
hood knew,  
Whose carpet was of flowers and softest moss.  
And farther ranged the hills eternal, crowned  
With trees that never shed their robes that glow  
Beneath the moveless sun that gives them day;  
And where their feet rest on the gentle slopes  
That part them from the spreading plain below,  
Broad shadows fell from everlasting canopies  
Where groves were vocal with the notes of birds  
That sing away the golden cycles of their deathless sphere.  
The rift was closed; but in my soul the joy  
Ecstatic dwelt. "O, is it death," I cried,  
"To pass this waveless tide and be where death is not?  
To rest in yonder groves and list to deathless tongues?  
To gaze on scenes that change not, nor can change?"

O lead me there! No terror can it have if that be death,  
and there

Dwell those I loved on earth where sorrow is."

A moment was my vision lost; and when

It came again I stood upon that wondrous plain

With beings of my Dream-guide's mould

About me. Songs of grove-choirs, full of sweetest chords,

And incense of the teeming meadows spreading far,

With perfume-laden breezes from the hills

O'ercame my untried spirit, and I sank

Into the arms my Beauteous One outheld.

A kiss she on my forehead pressed, and on the kiss let fall

A tear of tend'rest pity and of love.

My spirit quick revived, and then I heard

The name of LETHA, baby-sister of my longlost youth.

And when I heard that name, so long unheard on earth,

existing here

But on the simple stone that marks the spot

Where 'neath the little mound I saw forever hid

Her snowy, placid face, the joy within o'erwhelmed me;

And I saw no more of that unchanging strand

To which we drift unthinking on, for I awoke

And all the load of life upon me came again.

## FAITH'S CHILLING

High in the shapely tower it swung,  
The great sonorous bell, and flung  
From off its brazen lips and tongue  
Full, vibrant and exultant tones.  
I paused upon the pavement stones  
Below and listened. O'er my soul  
In thrilling ripples seemed to roll  
A summons from the bending sky,  
Whose far, blue depths outreached the eye  
That springtime morn, to worship's seat.  
With bended head and rev'rent feet  
I passed the arched door and stood  
Without the sanctuary, where  
I listened to the swelling flood  
The organ poured upon the air  
Of harmony; majestic, grand  
As that which waked the shepherd band  
It seemed 't must be.

I entered and  
An usher beckoned with his hand.  
I followed up the noiseless aisle

The soothing flood swept down the while;  
And when the pew door closed I sank  
Into the cushioned seat and drank  
From founts that sprang in Heaven's hills,  
I thought, and felt the Power that fills  
The walls of space and enters in  
Each human heart that seeks its sin  
To lose and God's sweet grace to win.  
The choir burst forth. Each voice that sang  
Was faultless, and the anthem rang  
Upon my tense and intent ear  
Distinct and beautiful and clear.  
But cold—how cold! Those voices told  
No story in their perfect tone  
Of God's abiding, as of old.

In hearts that sang to him alone.  
"They mock for money," then I said  
In sorrow, and I bowed my head;  
"They sing their praises all to men  
For man's reward."

My eyes again  
I raised to meet the pastor's face



---

Standing in his sacred place,  
Slight and full of youth and fair,  
To offer up the opening prayer.  
The seminary's training shone  
Through phrase and accent, gesture, pose;  
My heart sank slowly as a stone  
In ocean's depths as the prayer uprose.  
"He prays to men, for man's applause,"  
I cried within me.

And when came  
The sermon, in it God's great name  
Nor Christ's was emphasized, but passed  
As if they were the least and last  
To be considered in man's life.  
It dwelt on things of earth—the strife  
Of parties—measures—men; the gains  
Of art and science; all with pains  
Sought out, and told with flowing tongue.  
His hearers on his accents hung,  
For eloquence was there that fell  
Upon the hushed house like a spell,  
While his elaborated theme

---

Made man the greater God to seem.  
But Calvary's scene of death he spared;  
    "Him crucified" he would not paint,  
As preachers of the old time dared  
    In burning words, heart-spoken, quaint.

The organ loosed again its flood  
As cheerless on the tiles I stood  
Without the sanctuary's door  
And saw the ebbing tide outpour  
Of worshippers; but not a face  
    That looked in mine gave out a beam  
Caught in that house of added grace.

To me it did not sacred seem  
When on the pavement stones again  
    I stood and gazed upon the pile,  
A triumph of the hands of men,  
    And mused on what I'd seen the while  
I sat within, and wondered not  
That God by man's so oft forgot.

---

## DEATH OF JOHN BAPTIST.

Within an Eastern prison's noisome cell,  
Dank and dark and narrow, guarded lay  
The Christ's forerunner, Prophet, bound.  
No fault was his; no law of man or God  
By him was violate. But speaking out  
Against illicit love of one in whom  
Was vested Rome's unholy sway in Galilee  
Had drawn upon his head the cruel hate  
Of woman, more relentless far than man  
When sin hath in her heart usurped the seat of good.  
Again the year brought round the festal day  
On which was Herod wont to celebrate  
His birth, and in his sumptuous palace halls  
Were gathered there his guests of high degree.  
Story and jest and song with laughter rang  
And echoed from the walls. Red shone the wine  
And sparkled as 'twas drained from brimming cups,  
And with its fire to warm the full-fed blood,  
Still louder waxed the mirth around the board  
Till song and jest and boasting tale grew flat.  
Then called a favored one who sat at Herod's right,

---

“A dance, O King, Hast not a damsel here whose grace  
Can to the hours add wings ere they begin to creep?”  
Then joined they all, “A dance! a dance, O King!”

And Herod sent a message to his wife  
Commanding that into his presence come  
Her daughter, versed in all the subtle skill to please  
That marks the oriental maid of high estate.  
She came—a girl whose beauty well might captivate  
E'en sober brains and hearts that sought no more  
In woman than a perfect form, an eye with passion lit,  
Voluptuous grace in motion that could rouse  
And quicken most phlegmatic natures to admire.

Applause burst forth when in the tempered light  
She paused, her smile disclosing gleaming ivory,  
Her deep, dark orbs cast round with witching glance,  
With pearls and gold bedecked and wondrous hair  
Half hiding, half revealing, but marking stronger still  
Each charm of face, and neck and arms and billowing  
breast,

With robes that were well fashioned to throw out  
In strong relief the beauty-lines that most please men  
In sensual moods, or heated with the cup.

---

Then silence while she danced, or comment under breath,  
And loud acclaim of praise when she had done,  
And Herod's praise most generous of all.  
Flushed with exertion and with exultation she,  
Summoned, stood before him and he spake:  
"Most fair and graceful thou, and worthy of  
Our favor to the full. Ask what thou wilt to equal power  
Within our kingdom, and it shall be thine.  
These guests do hear our oath. Damsel, say thy wish."  
But she—a child she was in years, obedient to  
Her mother's will—would not until she knew that will  
Her wish prefer, and straightway sought her side.  
The proud Herodias, implacable in hate,  
Knew well the custom of the court and was resolved  
Within her heart that he should cease to live  
Who had offended not the law but her.  
So to the child she said, "Go, ask my lord the king  
That unto you he bring the head of him who now  
In bonds and prison lieth for my sake.  
He knoweth whom, nor dare he to refuse  
What he hath sworn to do."  
Quickly at his feet she stood again and spake

---

According to the counsel of her mother's lips.

Deep silence fell within the palace walls.

On Herod's face a moment pallor came and then a cloud

Of sorrow passed. Fear before had come between

His cruelty and John, whose innocence he knew,

And whom the people held as sent of God.

But now? Could he before his high-born guests abjure

His oath and live despised of them, unworthy of his  
name?

His word was out. Not unredeemed should it return:

He must be Herod still.

Forth went his edict; and the executioners

Within the prison's hold appear with lamp and sword.

The prisoner beholds the blade, but not a trace

Of fear comes in his strong and rugged face.

"What would ye, men," he asks, "with me this night?"

They answer him, "The king would have thy head

To grace the festival which he doth celebrate.

Kneel quickly: keep not waiting in the hall

His guests, nor tax his patience with our long delay."

" 'Tis but a sword's swift stroke 'twixt God's own face  
and me,

His servant, all unworthy Him to serve.  
My life is Herod's, but my spirit God's; to whom it flies—  
Be quick.”  
He kneels; a flash within the narrow walls  
Like summer's lightning, and a torrent darkly red;  
A trunk that trembles for a moment and is still;  
A gasp, and closing eyes. 'Tis all this side of Heaven.  
The guests retire to sleep away the night's carouse.  
Herodias dreams o'er the cruel triumph of her hate,  
While Herod ill at ease rolls on his wakeful couch  
And prays for light, remorseful asking oft,  
“Ah, if from the dead he come again?”

---

### REASON'S REBUKE.

The azure paled and turned to gold.  
The gold to purple; fold on fold  
The curtain-clouds were hung on high  
Across the gorgeous summer sky;  
And in the softened light the day  
Upon the mountains dying lay.

---

I sat and watched the changing scene  
Reflected in the quivering shæen  
The lake spread wide, by elf-breaths stirred,  
Or by the wild notes of a bird  
Whose song swept o'er the water's face  
From the dark, green shade at the mountain's base.  
The gold and purple faded; crept  
The shadows out; the dusk sky wept;  
The clouds rolled back behind the brow  
The mountain lifted, frowning now.  
The bird-notes faltered, then grew still;  
The lake's broad shimmer sank from sight;  
And water, grove and plain and hill  
Were blended in the hue of night.  
The stars came out, and twinkling fell  
Their soft, pale glimmer through the air.  
I yielded to sweet nature's spell  
And drifted musing free from care.  
"Come," said Fancy, "Come with me.  
Sail we o'er the ether sea;  
Sail we where bright rivers flow  
On other planets. lit by glow



---

Of other suns, and other years  
Mark the whirl of time; in spheres  
Where the changeful life of man  
Is measured by another span,  
His progress by another plan;  
In spheres where life is yet unknown  
And Force formative acts alone;  
In others yet where sullen Death  
    Broods over all—Time's work is done,  
All animate has yielded breath  
    And Desolation from the throne  
Of stern Fate's kingdom grimly sees  
The slow out-work of his decrees.  
Come, sail with me."

    She touched my brow,  
With unfelt fingers and the prow  
Of her craft unseen she turned away  
From earth and with the speed of day  
As it darts from the sun through space we whirled  
Round star and moon and world on world  
Till intellect reeled in effort vain  
    To comprehend in the vision shown

---

The reach of Force's vast domain,  
Whose sway all space alike must own.  
And I woke. I heard the lake's low plash;  
I saw the fire-fly's lantern flash;  
The beetle hummed in the soothing air;  
The cricket chirped in the wall, and where  
The east met the earth pale Luna's beam  
Softened the gloom with its rising gleam.  
I said, "Here have been problems given  
At my home's door too deep for me.  
With such has mind for ages striven,  
And still unwrit the answers be.  
The light and darkness both I see;  
The sun flame screened by hill and tree;  
I hear the music clear and low  
Come up from where the waters flow;  
I hear the hum of wings that beat  
The umbrous air, and at my feet  
Frail insects fill the night with sound,  
Though voiceless; and the landscape round  
Me's flecked with intermittent fire  
Phosphoric, burning without heat.

---

A thousand strings creation's lyre  
Hath, all attuned to concord sweet.  
And yet I cannot comprehend,  
How wide one vibrant arc may bend  
In Being's scale. I only know  
Its amplitude is governed by  
The power that makes yon worm to glow  
And the stars to swing in the boundless sky.  
Myself the greater mystery, yet  
All queries of WHITHER and WHENCE unmet  
And WHAT imperfectly understood."  
Then reason spake in pensive mood,  
"What profits it to seek thy source?  
The parent of all that is is Force  
Who with the sceptre Law compels  
Obedience from all matter, born  
To life or that in silence dwells.  
With sense and sentiment untorn.  
Come, take my hand and walk with me  
And half the mystery will not be.  
Thou'lt be content to live and die  
Without the knowledge of how and why."

## LEGEND OF SPIRIT LAKE.

It is a legend weird and old  
That still by Laced 'Esprit is told.  
Whose bosom clear and deep and cold  
Throws back the hue of northern skies  
And each slow flock that neath them flies—  
So mirror bright its surface lies.

Within it, hid from mortal sight,  
With his lone love whose face of white  
That glows like Heaven's far lamps of night  
Drives back the shadows to their cells,  
Bold Star-of-Day, the Lost Chief dwells—  
Lost Chief whose breast with vengeance swells.

Their wrath the wild Dakotan fears;  
And ne'er across the water steers  
His rocking craft, lest their list'ning ears  
Catch the paddle's plash, or their eyes, perchance,  
Its silvery flash in the sunbeam's glance  
Or the gleam of the ripples that shine and dance.  
For they waken the dread Storm Fiend who rends  
The thongs of the tempest wolves and sends

---

Them howling over the lake, and lends  
A frown to the clouds whose anger breaks  
In crash and roar till the scared earth quakes,  
The startled ooze through the low depths shakes,  
And the boatman sinks to the world below.  
And watching there their own they know;  
And the water sleeps in its charmed glow  
When the face that floats above is white,  
Like the far, dim lamps of Heaven at night  
That twinkle and glint in the leaden height.

THE LEGEND.

Widely roamed the Dakotas  
In the fair, crisp days of the Autumn  
When the prairies turned brown and the forests  
Resplendent in gold and in purple  
Shone in the soft yellow sunshine  
That blended the frost-painter's touches,  
Seeking the haunts of the bison  
And the deer that fed on the meadows.

Close by the Father of Waters  
Curled upward the smoke from their tepees,  
Or near to the margin of lakelets—

---

Footprints of the Great Spirit—  
Shining upon the broad landscape.  
There speared they the fish and the turtle,  
There gathered they fruits from the thickets;  
And dried there the flesh that the hunters  
Brought from the long, weary chases  
For their living when back to the village  
The North-wind should drive them, and Winter  
Should lock up the store-house of Nature.

Or far on the Mightier river  
Whose waters are turbid and angry  
As they roll with the thaws from the mountains  
Swift toward the Gulf where the southland  
Bathes in the sun-heated tidewaves,  
Their brave men followed the war path,  
And the blood of their enemies stained it  
Behind them with streakings of crimson.  
Homeward they turned them rejoicing,  
Flaunting the gore-knotted scalplocks,  
Trophies of valor the old men  
Looked on and boasted of bold deeds  
Themselves had accomplished aforetime,

---

Ere Age, the patient old warrior  
Had stript them of strength and endurance  
And bidden them stay with the women.

Young Star-of-Day was their war chief.  
Brown was his face as his fellows';  
Matted and black were his long locks;  
Keen was his eye as the eagle's;  
Stronger his arm was than any  
That followed him; and in the ambush  
None was as he so successful;  
While in the fury of the battle  
His stroke was the stroke of the lightning  
Whose flash rives the heart of the oak tree.

In his veins coursed the blood of the white man.  
He knew it not; for he never  
Had known of the mother who bore him,  
The mother who long years had mourned him.  
The squaw who had nourished his childhood  
Had stolen him from the rude cradle  
Where, crowing and catching at sunbeams,  
He lay in the cabin at evening  
Where the land of the pioneer paleface

---

Touched the domain of Dakota.  
She named him from the star-whiteness  
Of his face as it glowed in the twilight.  
Kind had she been, and he loved her  
And thought of her ever as mother.

He was loved of the tribes, and they trained him  
In all the rude arts of the warrior,  
That he should succeed Um-pa-sho-ta,  
The Chief whom their old men had followed.

One eve as the band by a lake side  
Stopped for rest from their marching,  
There lay, wearied out with exertion  
In following day-long her captors,  
A maiden of radiant beauty  
Weeping upon the coarse grasses.  
White was her face as the starlight,  
Golden her hair as the sunset,  
Blue were her eyes as the heavens,  
And she pleadingly looked at the Chieftain  
In silence, imploring compassion.  
She reached the bold heart with her prayer.  
He pitied her sorrow and loved her.



---

He felt in his breast a new impulse  
Unknown to the tribes of the prairie,  
And knew he was not a Dakotan.

When the braves had sunk into slumber  
Deep and undreaming around him,  
He stole to the maiden who sleepless  
Still sobbed as she lay on the grasses,  
Lonely and frightened and trembling.  
He loosened the thongs that had bound her,  
And lifting her up in his strong arms  
Bore her quickly out from among them,  
And down where the waters complaining  
Impatiently beat on the margin  
In musical murmurs, though sullen.  
There nestled among the rank sedges  
A boat. It was frail and unsteady;  
But safety lay over the waters.  
Escaped from the bands of Dakota,  
They'd fly to the land of the white men;  
For the new revelation within him  
Had told him that their blood was his blood.  
There would he love her he'd rescued.

---

Half across the expanse he had paddled  
When the breath of the east wind grew stronger  
And the wavelets, now tipped with the silver  
The moon as she rose threw upon them,  
Grew rough in their play, leaping over  
The low-floating sides of the vessel.  
It sank; and the Chief and the maiden  
Went down to the world of the dead men.  
Sinking he cursed the Dakotas.  
In the caverns of Death he still hates them,  
And none of the tribes dare offend him  
By crossing the lake where they perished.  
For the storms will obey him. Destruction  
He sends o'er the face of the water.  
And thus have the tribes of the northland  
Been taught to shudder and whisper  
When they speak of the lake and its story—  
The death-haunted Lake of the Spirit.

---

## IN NATIONAL CEMETERY.

The holy hush of dewy eve comes down  
As falls a gauzy curtain, dim seen through.  
The soft and pensive glow dies in the west.  
Moistened breezes wander past my cheek  
And lay their gentle touch on my uncovered brow  
And whisper poesy into my ear. The maple leaves  
Are stirred with still, small voices, too—  
But yonder robin, hopping on the sward, is mute with  
strange bright eyes.

I wander in this low abiding place,  
This silent city where the dead yet live;  
Where flesh and bone resolve to dust and take  
Again their ancient place among the elements,  
But still the blood-wrought deed survives,  
And mocks at time, and scorns oblivion.  
In all the backward reach of history is any dead  
Who lived for ends beyond the narrow pale of self?

I think and slowly stroll. My fleshly senses fail.  
I'm borne into the past. Time's wing  
Whirls back, and once again I stand, a wondering boy,

---

Yet with a man's discernment  
The silence is no more, but round my ears  
A storm of sounds that fill with dread the timid heart,  
But nerve the brave to strong and steady beat:  
The heavy cannon's boom—the musket's crash  
As hurtles from its muzzle leaden death—  
The circling saber's steely clang—the hoof's wild tramp—  
The whirr of flying wheels as batteries seek their place—  
The shriek of shell, and neigh of plunging steed  
As bloody rowels tear his foaming flank—  
The Stentor-voiced command that rises o'er the fray—  
The victor's cheer that shakes the heaven's dome—  
The loud, deep curse that falls from vanquished lips—  
The dying warrior's groan, breathed out unheard  
By all save God—all rush at once upon my ear,  
And half o'erwhelm its lower sense.  
But in its higher sphere of inspiration,  
And clear as golden harps that wake the halls of Hope,  
Another voice is heard:  
“'Tis God defends the right; man strikes the blow,  
But He doth aim; all time is His, and he  
Doth do His will as suits the age.

---

With every stroke, though blood in torrents fall,  
Is ERROR driven from another hold;  
And right is TRUTH, and she doth bolder grow,  
And will at last assert her universal sway—  
It is not death to fall the broken sword of God.”

The stars, with cold, white eyes, look down;  
The chaos of stern sounds recedes and dies;  
Time whirls again into the living hour;  
I look, and at my feet the modest stones  
I see—to other ears so mute! And yet  
How eloquent to me, my emotions full awake!  
Shall these low stones, these lipless orators,  
In vain admonish us who yearly strew  
With flowers this sod to hold forever fast  
The peace they bought who sleep beneath?  
A flag untorn—a freedom more than name—  
A NATION where THE MAN is merged in nothing higher,  
But out from him is every reckoning run?

At Ft. Scott, Kansas, 1889.

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## FUGA TEMPORIS.

Down the icy steep the Year is gone—  
Down to where the gulf of Hath Been yawns  
To swallow all the years of Earth, Time's children.  
Pinched was his face and haggard, and his eye  
Was fireless, blinded with the snow.  
His locks whipt white in the ruthless air.  
His body, frail and drawn with age,  
Unsteady limbs and broken staff upbore  
With trembling remnant of departed strength.  
A hollow moan his voice. No more  
With gladsome speech and song he cheered  
The sons of toil with promise fair  
Of toil's reward. His work was done.  
He brought them opportunity. He gave  
Them time to sow, to cultivate, the golden moons  
Of harvest, and passed on not looking back,  
But leaving them with will or strong or weak to do.  
How well they used these gifts was not his care,  
Or if they were despised he did not heed.  
For each must answer to and for himself  
How much he's done or failed to do of what he could

---

Since Spring, his first gift, blooming fell  
From his warm hand.

The Year is type of Life.  
Man has his time to sow, to till, to reap.  
'Tis his to will what he shall garner when  
The time of harvest comes, as come it must.  
Ah, with what report shall I respond,  
And each of us, to what life's Master asks  
In our accounting? Can with courage we  
Say "Master, I have wrought the best I knew,"  
Or must we with vain regrets excuse  
And wish to live again the year that ne'er can be?  
The year that's born today resolve to live  
So well that whether Fortune smile or frown  
On worldly strivings that must each engage,  
Sweet Conscience on our heavy hearts may pour  
The balm that soothes away remorse.

---

## YOUTH, AGE, HAPPINESS.

A maiden sat by a young man's side.

He held her hand, and her brown eyes fell  
On the grass at their feet, but his with pride  
Looked into her face, for he loved her well.

'Twas the evening time of a summer's day,  
And the soft air came from the golden west  
With a sweet, cool breath, and it paused to play  
With the thick, dark tresses the youth caressed.

Happy was he that summer's eve,  
For she to his wooing had answered "yes"—  
Had promised the whole wide world to leave  
And trust in him for her happiness.

They looked down the vista of coming time  
And builded them castles of gilded air.  
Their ears were touched with a faint, far chime  
As they walked together in Love's Land fair.

---

Three score years have come and gone,  
And again they sit in the fading day.  
Again the west wind wandering on  
Toys with the tresses thin and gray.



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They've lived through the vista, the time is flown.

Their shining castles all melted from sight.

Yet they look still ahead where the golden sun

Gilds the Heavenly spires with a lasting light.

But he loves her still and she loves him

The same as when life in both was new.

Though their clasped hands tremble, their eyes be dim,

Their hearts with the old love beat strong and true.

Ah, happy indeed are those happy in age,

Whose closing life's volume brings no regret

To gnaw at the heart, but shows a fair page,

A record of good deeds, earth's duties well met.

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## TOAST.

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THE DAY WE CELEBRATE.—OUR FLAG.

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Unfurl thy scroll, Oh History,

Unfurl it and the day

We celebrate restore to me.

Let my imagination see

---

Those grand old heroes throng the Hall,  
And hear each patriotic wall  
In ringing echoes words repeat  
That throw the gauntlet at the feet  
Of haughty Britain's stubborn king.  
The day when Freedom's weary wing  
From soaring without place of rest,  
For thousand years turned to the West,  
And sweeping Atalanta's main,  
With glad cry found repose again—  
Thy scroll unfurl, Oh History,  
Restore to me that day.

I live that day! Oh Mystery  
That hath restored to me  
Each form and feeling, word and deed,  
The steel-nerved courage that doth heed  
No peril that the future shakes  
With bloody hand, but bravely breaks  
The bonds injustice overstrains.  
Above the clanking of the chains  
Thrown down I hear the Bell ring out.  
The welkin quivers with the shout

---

That from the plain and mountain floats  
Responsive from three million throats.

“ ’Tis war! ’Tis war, ’Tis war! ’Tis war,”

Proclaimed and answered near and far.

That day I live, Oh Mystery,

That hath restored it me.

Thou’st writ the story, glowing Past,

On thine eternal Page—

How long in blood the suns arose

How Glory’s halo crowned the close.

Those heroes are but formless dust:

Their souls live on, as live the just.

Their memories and their works are given

To us a sacred trust. May Heaven

Defend us while we them defend,

And Freedom’s proud domain extend.

Then fill the cup. Drink to the Day.

To patriot hearts, long turned to clay.

To Bell that rang to all the free

The natal song of Liberty.

Fill high the cup. With joy we’ll drain

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To thee, Our Country's Flag, Again.  
May we its story, like the Past,  
Write on a glorious page.  
July 4, 1893.

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### LIFE'S CYCLES.

Under the trees two children play;  
Laughing boy and girl are they.  
He with eyes of night's deep hue.  
Hers of the cloudless sky's own blue.  
Careless they romp on the velvet grass  
While the scented days of spring-time pass.  
'Tis the roses' month. Two figures stray  
Where the moon-cast shadows silent play.  
A fair young head on a shoulder leans—  
Luna of old know'th what it means.  
Slowly is paced the path that lies  
Where the elms in ancient grandeur rise.

Under the trees two children play  
Merrily speeding the long, bright day.

---

Boy and girl with eyes whose hue  
Finds its fount in a mother's of rarest blue,  
And by her side a bronzed man stands,  
Stroking her brow with toil-hard hands.

Again beneath the elms at play  
Two children laugh in the autumn day.  
Light of eye is the girl I see,  
But his is dark as the crow's wings be.  
Watching now two mothers stand  
Clasping each one a man's strong hand.  
Rocking at ease on the porch the while  
Two aged ones look on and smile.  
Through glasses gleam night's faded hue  
And the paling light of the heaven's blue  
As they see themselves in the babes and stray  
Far back o'er memory's long pathway.  
Ah, Life repeats as Time flits by  
The same sweet things, tho' we age and die.  
We live again in our babes and theirs,  
Our joys renewed, forgotten our cares.  
We grow old; yet the world is young  
Alway as when the star-hymn rung.

## AUTUMN.

A hush is o'er the woodland now  
Where song-birds used to trill  
Their sweet lays while the summer yet  
Sat smiling on the hill.

The yellow leaves fall gently down .  
Upon the with'ring grass.  
They rustle dryly 'neath my feet,  
Complaining as I pass.

A leaden light is in the sky—  
No more the sunset glows  
With gold and purple, royal hues;  
Gone is the day-dawn's rose.

Like my own youth the springtime fled,  
The summer like my prime;  
And now the frost lies on my life  
As on these woods the rime.

The thoughts I think oppress my heart;  
Death's winter is before;  
I feel its winds upon my cheek,  
I hear their sullen roar.

---

Begone. I'll laugh away such thoughts.

These trees are bare; but know  
They'll wear again as green a garb  
In time beyond the snow.

Shall these dumb trees see life renewed  
And not to me be given  
The same sweet boon? I can not think  
So cruelly of Heaven.

Then, Winter, come. Make bare the woods  
And dull the burnished sky.  
Drive song and songster all away;  
But you yourself must fly.

And Death, come. Still my pulsing heart.  
To you I yield my breath—  
But know that where this body lies  
With it lies conquered Death.

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## EASTER.

Easter! Day when the goddess Spring  
Forth from her white tent comes to bring  
Life to the fields and woods again  
With smiling sun and gentle rain;  
When she drapes with blue the vaulted sky  
And floats the fleecy clouds on high;  
When she softens the winds that come to play  
O'er spreading meadows in the lengthened day;  
When she calls by name each sweet wild flower,  
Bidding it waken on bank, in bower;  
And says to the birds, "Come back with me—  
Come build your homes in hedge and tree.  
Make glad the world with your lightsome glee  
Of twitter and song—Come back with me."  
Beautiful Spring! Fair season of love  
When earth seems nearer to heaven above.  
But a dearer thought is ours today.  
We think of the great stone rolled away  
From the tomb of old—of the Savior risen  
From the bonds of death—of the gloomy prison



Of the grave o'ercome, and life proved more  
Than a lone, sad walk on Time's bleak shore.  
Oh, do we feel on this glad day  
The love due Him who taught the way  
From the dark abysmal depths of night  
To the glories that gleam in God's clear light?  
Day of the season of promise, throw  
Thy love on the new-waked life below.  
Day of the Resurrection, give  
A sweeter joy to those who live  
In the hope of Heaven, the Christian's faith  
That the Lord arising vanquished death.

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## TWO SONGS—WAR AND LOVE.

### I

I wrote a song of brave men's deed's—  
A song of death on the reeking plain,  
Where red War stalks o'er the shot-rent slain;  
Where the gaunt wood-wolf with the vulture feeds.  
I wrote of the cannon's stunning crash,

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Of the crackling muskets' line-long flash,  
Of the shell that screams through the nitrous pall,  
Of the circling sabre's gleam and fall.

And the song I wrote brought the fire again  
To the eye of the tottering veteran,  
A flush to the cheek of the age-bent man,  
And nerved anew the palsing hand  
That had drawn the blade for Native Land,  
As the mind flew swift from Now till Then.

## II

I wrote a song of a woman's loving—  
A song of a mother's life devotion,  
A wife's sweet trust and the soundless ocean,  
Of a maid's pure faith who, fancy-roving,  
Treads all the paths of the Time Untried,  
In Hope's light walks by her Chosen's side  
Where fruited trees screen the sun's mild heat,  
And roses blossom beneath her feet.

And the love-song softened the snows that lay  
On shrunken temples until their flow  
Gave light to the eye in a moistened glow,

---

And the swelling breast caught the pearl that fell  
From the trembling brim of the old heart's well,  
As the soul looked back on the Far-away.

Which song was best—ay, which was best,  
War-song or love-song—what be the test?

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### TO THREE FRIENDS.

Slipped and drōwsing in my easy chair,  
With limbs unsteady and slowly whirling mind,  
Emerging from the swirl of fiery fever's flame  
In which for many days it had revolved,  
I sat. It was the day before the Christ-child's birth  
Is celebrated; but little thought I'd given to the time.  
While thus I sat, upon the stony street outside  
The sound of wheels that halted at the gate  
I heeded not until a moment passed. My wife  
Presented then to my dilated eyes,  
A basket—a modest grocer's basket 'twas.  
But in that basket lay, from regions separate far,  
The rarest fruits these eyes had e'er beheld—

---

From the Floridian coast; from Europe's southern slopes;  
From broad and sunny valleys 'neath Californian skies,  
And from less genial vineyards of the north:  
And all the best, most perfect of their kind.  
And crowning all the basket's wealth there lay—  
How shall I name it who never had within the house  
A corkscrew?—a bottle rare of Royal Port, heart-warm-  
ing.

Companion fit, most meet, for these sweet fruits,  
Fresh from their growths, refreshing as the dews,  
While it the sunshine is, ay, and the showers.  
But valued most of all, devoured first,  
The letter was below.\* Friendships words it bore,  
Couched in friendship's terms that touch  
And cheer the heart, more than does wine.  
I can not answer now as I would do,  
But only weakly thank, with feeble hand and mind,  
Though strong and warm and quickly throbs my heart,  
Kind friends; but thanks profuse you have.

D. F. PEFFLEY.

December 26th, 1892.

\*DEAR PEFFLEY:

This being the time of rejoicing, and especially so for a man who has just

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been through the fire of fever, we thought you might be glad to know that though temporarily lost to sight you are still "to memory dear" With the wish of seeing you once more among us at an early date, restored to health and vigor, and with the joyful compliments of the season, we are, dear friend,

Faithfully yours,

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE,

E. F. WARE,

J. P. ROBENS.

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## THE PASSING OF OCTOBER.

Now is the time of frost and falling leaves.

The breath of Autumn chills the circling blood.  
The Year with age is trembling, and he grieves  
To see the beauty fade from field and wood.

He gave them life and richly clothed them all  
In leaf and blade and flower, in fruit and grain.  
He gave them birds to carol sweet and bring  
The sylvan joys to pensive minds again.

The mandates of the ice-god they obey,  
Yet not for aye. A new Year will arise  
And with it come the lengthened, softened day  
And waking leaf and song 'neath brooding skies.

---

## THE MUSIC OF THE HEART.

I have listened to the music  
When far-famed singers stood  
Where cultured list'ners crowded,  
And stirred them as a wood  
Stirs to summer's breezes or the storm's exultant mood.

I have listened all enraptured  
When the grand piano's chords  
Threw back to master-fingers  
Music far-outspeaking words—  
Rill's clear ripple, thunder's roll, the singing of the birds.

But the dearest music ever  
On my heart's deep ear hath pealed  
Is the laughter of the children  
At play in wood or field--  
Music never taught nor writ, from chords in souls  
concealed.

## A BALLAD OF THE FLEETS.

It is midnight at Manila and the ghostly mists hang chill  
Over water, over island, over fort and in-shore hill.  
All is quiet with the dreamy, drowsy quiet of the East.  
Save the sentry's measured pacing every sound of life has ceased.

But the low waves murmur softly as they roll upon the strand;  
Are they whispering a secret to their playmate—to the sand?  
And the far-off stars are trembling in the overbending height;  
Do they signal down the danger floating under them this night?

On the Spanish fleet the gunners, sleeping in the arms of Fate,  
The coming of destruction all unconsciously await  
While away the gloom fades slowly and the feet of Dawn draw nigh  
Walking silent on the hilltops east where ~~they~~ meet the land and sky.

On another fleet the gunners close no eye in sleep tonight,  
But with nerves as tense as harpstrings creep before the creeping light,  
Safe within the harbor stealing ere the foeman is aware  
'Neath the lower fallen drapery of the May-morn hanging there.

"Armas! A las armas!" shouts the sentry pointing to  
The grey-dark monsters looming the grey-white vapors through,  
"Vienen los enemigos!" Up the bay the warships float,  
And grim Cavite's challenge roars from out her iron throat.

The fleets impatient wait the sun upon this fateful day  
The game of war, men's lives for pawns, in lust of blood to play.  
And when the eve is come again beneath the frightened waves  
There lie wrecked ships that coffin men low in their oozy graves.

Brave men were there on either side. They died as brave men die,  
The foemen who beneath the bay of far Manila lie.  
Thank we the God of Battles that 't was theirs, not ours, who fell.  
Ah! Did the God of Judgment breathe that day the flames of hell?

---

## SUNNYEYES.

Busy little Sunnyeyes—  
Eyes as blue as summer skies  
And as bright as summer suns—  
Leaps and laugh the while she runs  
After pretty butterflies  
Playing over meadow flowers.  
Not a thought of fleeting hours  
Has my little Sunnyeyes,  
Chasing still with gleeful cries,  
'Till I call her, "Come to me."  
For my darling doesn't know  
With her racing to and fro  
In the day tide's broadened flow  
She's as tired as she can be.  
Soon within my arms she sleeps  
But in sleeping laughs and leaps  
And I know she's still in dreaming  
Chasing after tinted wings,  
Pretty, fragile, flying things,  
That are only fair in seeming,  
And that caught are crushed in taking,  
Into dusty fragments breaking.



---

Then I thus soliloquize:  
“Like are I and Sunnnyeyes.  
Both are chasing butterflies  
Over Life’s wide meadow lands.  
Cut and bleeding are our hands  
With thistle’s blade and rose’s thorn.  
Neither knows how weary we  
In our vain pursuits may be  
Till we hear the “Come to me”  
Of our Father and we fall  
In His loving arms asleep,  
There to rest for aye and all.  
When at last in slumber deep  
So lie I, like Sunnnyeyes  
Will I dream of butterflies?

---

THE KNIGHT IN BLUE.  
Country calls, country calls  
Me away.  
War’s wing flaps upon our walls,  
O’er the land its shadow falls  
And the timid heart appalls  
With its play.

---

Trumpets bravely, blithely blare  
By the sea  
Calling us to gather there,  
Bidding us to do and dare  
Following our Banner where  
E'er it be.

I had hoped that ne'er again  
Mars should say,  
"Tramping thousands, shake the plain,  
"Sulph'rous voices, fright the main.  
"Blood Columbia's hands must stain,  
Death have sway."

But he's spoken, we've replied,  
Cast the die.  
God and justice be our guide.  
Right or wrong on Patria's side  
Men have ever won or died—  
So must I.

---

## SOMETIMES I'D CALL THE OLD TIME BACK.

Sometimes I'd call the Old Time back,  
But not to live it o'er again;  
Too rough has been life's flinty track,  
For these torn feet to keen the pain.

But there were those I loved when we  
Together walked the years ago.  
THEY laid them down to rest, but me  
Relentless Fate whips slowly on.

One moment to look in those eyes,  
One clasp of mine in those warm hands,  
One ringing word of glad surprise  
To greet me in the Old Time lands,

Were bliss! But no—'Twill not return.  
Again I would not live it o'er.  
They rest within my own heart's urn  
Whom I would greet—They're THERE no more.

---

## STEER FAR OUT.

Full oft along the shore  
Rock fights with furious wave

---

And shuddering headland wails,  
While far out safely sails  
A good ship breasting brave  
The storm's wild strength and roar.  
Then steer thy bark far out  
On life's uncertain sea  
Beyond the rocks nor doubt  
There thou wilt safer be.

---

#### WHAT OF THE SEA?

What treasure undreamed of by me  
Lieth down in the depths of the sea—  
The Future's unfath'mable sea,  
Whose waters so dark are to me?  
What storm sweeping over that sea  
In its fury shall o'erwhelm me—  
In my life-bark shall o'erwhelm me  
That I sink to the depths of the sea?  
There is none can give answer to me  
What I ask of the Future's dark sea—  
Whether good shall come up from that sea  
Or if sorrow and death it bring me.

---

### MOTHER-LOVE.

There's nothing in heaven above,  
Nor in the earth below,  
So precious as mother-love.  
Yet often we do not know  
Till the selfish strife  
On the field of life  
Has painfully taught us so.

---

### BEYOND THE HORIZON.

I saw the Moon like a silvern bark,  
Sail slowly over the boundless sea—  
Glide down the West till the mountains dark  
It found and they hid it away from me.  
But I knew it was sailing on and on.  
I knew that Earth's rock-sinewed hands  
Had not grasped it, and my bark was gone  
To glide and to gleam over unseen lands.  
As the pale Orb seeks the horizon's shade,  
So man finds rest on the shore of Time.  
But in that rest the soul's not stayed;  
It wings away over lands sublime.

---

## APRIL.

“The Spring is with us again.” we say  
And mellow grows the lengthened day.  
The ripples where the waters run  
In sport beneath the April sun  
Make merrier music as they break  
Against the banks of stream or lake.  
The hoarseness of old Winter’s voice  
As through the tree-tops dry and dead  
A dirge o’er Nature’s corse he sung  
Or loud his boast of triumph rung  
From frost-bells on each mountain head,  
Is gone, and valleys all rejoice  
With airs that on the softest cheek  
Are hardly felt. The tree-tops speak  
A language now the rambler hears  
With listless yet sympathic ears.

Now all things own the Passion’s sway;  
The sunshine woos the flowers, and they  
Woo bee and humming-bird and maid.  
The swain upturns the opening earth,

And feels within his breast a birth  
Like that of plants that burst the glade.  
He knows not what, nor why, nor how,  
But yet there moves beside his plow  
An unseen presence that has laid  
A warm hand on his heart. It goes  
By night with him to his repose  
And round his couch spreads dreams so fair  
That heaven seems nearer when the air  
Of dawn with fragrance greets again  
His rested strength.

A glad refrain  
Floats from the deep chord in his soul,  
Tuned with the mightier chords that roll  
The anthem of the Spheres along,  
The grand Creation's morning song  
Whose octave sweeps from Law to Love;  
Whose volume fills the dome above,  
The depths below; while side to side  
The echoless caves of utmost Space  
Are filled as the waves of Harmony race  
An ebbing, rising, but ceaseless tide

---

Whose flow begins with the Spring and swells  
Till it reaches its height in the sweet rose-bells  
When June, the delight of circling Time,  
Rings out from her bowers the hymn sublime.

The Spring! 'Tis the season of love and hope,  
When the instinct of life is waked in all;

When the buds 'neath the sod arouse and ope,  
And in the vine on the sun-kissed wall,

And the ivy springs in the maiden's heart  
Till it clings to the oak in the heart of the swain,

And life is one till Death's dull dart  
Cleaves them apart, to unite again

Where ivy and oak both green shall be  
In the valley, and spring is Eternity.

---

### THE WIND'S WORK.

The wind blows wild, the wind blows free.  
It wafts grand ships o'er the broad blue sea  
With the wealth of lands that lie afar.  
It drives the storm-fiend's roaring car.  
It drinks the dews where daisies grow,  
It lifts the mists from the meadows low.



---

It cools the burning summer noon,  
It whispers love to the summer moon.  
Through the vines of the cottage window creeps  
And fans the face of the babe that sleeps,  
Or the couch of the sufferer softly seeks  
And soothes the heat from the fevered cheeks.  
The wind blows wild, the wind blows free,  
And it works as it will on land and sea.

---

### SONG OF THE WEST.

The West! the West!

I love it best—

The broad, free West with its wealth untold—  
Grand Nature's home's in its mountains old.

Its dawns 'neath curtains of rose unfold,  
Its sunsets linger in purple and gold,

While the dome of the day

Is azure alway

And the diamonds that stud the crown of night  
On age-worn peaks throw a quivering light  
That gleams and glints through the crystal air,  
Illuming the silence eternal there.

Here man is little and God is great,  
And He works with patience while ages wait.  
And he hath reserved to the last the best—  
The broad, the free, the golden West.

---

### A SUMMER'S DAY THOUGHT.

The grass-waves roll like waves on the sea  
As winds chase over the meadows.  
The green vine shakes with the swaying tree  
And the sunlight plays with the shadows.  
To the hurrying breeze the grainfields bow  
As it hastes with its kisses to dry  
The sweat from the sturdy farm boy's brow  
At work 'neath the cloudless sky.  
O'er clovers red the brown bees hum  
Intent on their winter's store.  
Up the sparkling pool the minnows come  
In the shade of its mossy shore.  
A day to lounge on the sward and dream  
Is this, aye, to dream of youth,  
When the world was a world that did not seem  
But was a world of Truth.

---

Ah, visions of hope, of love and light!  
Oh, castles we builded then,  
Peopled with beings come down from the Height—  
And they proved but children of men!  
Now disillusioned, heartsore and worn,  
The gold we had gathered but dross,  
’Tis sweeter to dream of what might be than mourn—  
We must bear, let us lighten, our cross.

---

#### LOVE’S READING.

Mignonette,  
Dear Mignonette,  
Lift to mine your eyes of jet.  
Let me read the secret deep  
Locked behind your lips you keep—  
Let me read it, Mignonette,  
Written in your eyes of jet.

Mignonette,  
Oh Mignonette,  
Will you keep it from me yet?  
Raise those lashes from your cheek.

---

Let to mine your dark eyes speak—  
Speak and tell me, Migonette,  
With your eyes of burning jet.

Migonette,  
My Migonette,  
Now your eyes and mine have met,  
Light from out their depths has spoken,  
They the seal of lips have broken  
And you love me, Migonette,  
Says your heart from depths of jet.

---

FANCY BORNE.

Come, my love, and soar with me  
Where wild winds wing so wide and free—  
Sweetly wild  
They fly,  
Or mad or mild,  
Across the sky:  
Come, my dear one, soar with me.  
We'll rise to the realms of upper air  
Whence Earth looks dim and far and fair,

---

And the pale  
Rare blue  
Mists' clear thin veil  
Enchants the view—  
Come, rise with me in the upper air.  
'Neath moon and glinting star and sun  
We'll race those tireless pinions on—  
Care's dull flight  
Outdone,  
We'll live in light  
The glad heart's own,  
Away 'neath moon and star and sun.

---

### DAWN.

In the clear silent night,  
By fair Luna's pale light,  
The dew with rich gems decks the red rose's spray,  
And they shine there at morn,  
When the day-god's first born,  
Aurora the Beautiful, comes forth to play.

---

And the rose's blush burns  
Deeper still as she turns  
Her cheek to the kiss of the maiden who opes  
The orient's gates  
Where Phoebus awaits  
Till she wakens the world to new labors and hopes.  
What balm fills the air,  
And its perfume how rare!  
How sing the glad chorists hid deep in the grove!  
O, now it is sweet  
To sit down at the feet  
Of nature and learn from her lessons of love.

---

### LOVE NOT IN VAIN.

Ah, my airy  
Winsome Fairy,  
Why do you thus around me  
Weave your subtle chain?  
Soon, my charmer, you'll have bound me  
Ne'er to loose again.

---

Why, beguiling  
With your smiling  
All my heart away from me,  
Do you taunting stay  
From these arms that wait for thee?  
Tell me, tempting Fay.

Do not mock me,  
Do not mock me—  
Sprite of moonlight, fly away.  
Tempt me not again.  
Let me love a child of Day  
And love not in vain.

---

BE A MAN.

If you cannot be a hero,  
Lead a nation's arms to glory,  
Write your name in letters gory  
'Mong the great in song and story,  
You may be a MAN.

If you cannot be a monarch,  
Holding in a mighty hand

---

The scepter o'er a chosen land,  
Erect and proud you yet may stand—  
You may be a MAN.

If you cannot be a painter,  
May not limn the uncreate,  
Pigment, canvas insensate  
Change to life's immortal state,  
You may be a MAN.

If you cannot be a poet,  
Sing to all the world for ages  
Deathless verse, as Homer's pages  
That must live while passion rages,  
You may be a MAN.

And in truth there's nothing greater  
Than the noblest work of God,  
An honest sovereign of the sod  
Unwhipt of vice's scathing rod—  
A clean-souled common man.

---

#### A SPRING SONG.

Merrily O, Merrily O,  
Across the bare fields spring chases the snow.



---

Clothed with the sunshine she gaily trips forth,  
And winter, abashed, steals away to the north.  
In her foot-prints the violets raise their blue eyes  
And peep from their beds at the deep, liquid skies.  
The birds in the trees are rocked by the breeze,  
The breath of her laughter as on she flies after  
The tyrant whose ice-beard still melts as he flees.

The black-bird is singing his "tee, le, le, ling."  
The robin is bathing his beak in the spring  
Where the light dimples play, as the stream on its way  
Passing under the willows, smiles back at the day.  
There is love 'mong the songsters, each seeking his mate  
And a place for her nest in the hedge by the gate.  
There is cawing of crows and crowing of cocks,  
And bleating of lambs, as they race with the flocks.  
Without and within is the unending din  
Of the farm when its labors in earnest begin.

There is love 'mong the swains, when at eve from the  
plows

Each Ike finds his 'Bekah a milking the cows.  
With her milk-pail a-brimming, her true heart a-swim-  
ming

---

In its own sea of purity, ling'ring she'll stand  
By the creaking lot-gate with her shapely white hand  
On its latch and deny him the way to the well,  
While her blooming round cheek and her dancing black  
eye

Weave a net round his heart, never woven by art,  
Whose meshes will hold till life's fountain runs dry.  
Oh love, what thy charm and how potent thy spell!

With banter and laugh the low gate bending over,  
Like the bee as it seeks the sweet lips of the clover  
Whose nectar it kisses away with the dew,  
So quick to her lips, ere his meaning she guesses,  
The o'er-tempted plowman his own boldly presses—  
Blame not the bold swain, for to nature he's true.  
Loud laugh the rude rustics, while mantled in blushes,  
Like a lakelet when sunset streams red through its rushes,  
Away to the dairy she, like a fairy  
Of old German forest, who tripped where the glades  
Were lit by the moon whose pale light not more airy  
Was than the dancers who trooped from the shades,  
Flies with her heart more tenderly beating,  
'Thrilled and subdued with young love's blissful greeting.

---

I CANNOT KNOW.

I cannot see—

I know not why  
The arched sky  
That bends o'er me  
Is sapphire's hue,  
Deep, clear and blue.

I cannot see

Why winter's snow  
Pure white should glow,  
Or why 't should be  
So gently shed  
On fields all dead.

Nor do I know

Why comes the rose  
As springtime goes  
To bud and blow;  
Nor why its cheek  
Hearts' love should speak

Why are the flowers  
That deck the plain

---

Unlike the grain,  
When selfsame showers,  
One life to lend,  
On both descend?

Ah! I know not.  
My eyes are dim.  
I see not HIM  
Nor how is wrought  
His humblest plan:  
I am but a Man.

---

“SLUG SIX IS DEAD.”

The foreman moved with a softened tread  
O'er the black and littered floor,  
And his grizzled head bent lower  
While an added stoop his shoulders bore.  
With a tear in his eye and a heart-born sigh  
He whispered, “Slug six is dead.”

“Poor old Slug Six!” The printers knew  
How the foreman felt that day—  
That his friend had gone away

---

Where the souls of good men rest for aye  
In the radiance bright of the land of light,  
The home of the tried and true.

“Slug Six and I were boys as yet—”

He was stern with living men,  
But his tones were woman’s then—

“When we came to the office together, and when  
We earned our cases and took our places  
And life’s first takes we set.”

“He wooed my sister, and his I won.

We were wedded the self same time,  
And life was a joyous chime

As the years sped on to manhood’s prime,  
And our little ones played in the same cool shade,  
Or romped in the same glad sun.

“Our friendship bound as a golden chain

Us two in this selfish sphere

Where oft we pay so dear

For a friendship only from lip to ear.

For each knew the other clung nearer than brother  
When trouble came close in his train.

---

“And old Slug Six was a workman, too.

His case was always clean;

No dirty proof was seen

Ever passed to his slug, though his light be mean;

His column's edge straight as the path trod by fate,

Each line of it justified true.

“There lie on his case his rule and sticks,

His tools in a life-work long,

A life that now seems a song

Of toil with patience, with naught that was wrong.

As silver they're bright in the dim, dusty light,

Like the record of old Slug Six.

“Pardon me, boys, these moistened eyes.

You only a craftsman knew;

I more—a man that was true

To his work and his kind, of a number too few.

For the millions live more to win than to give—

For the gain that but self gratifies.

“Let his pipe and his glasses lie on the sill,

And his apron hang still on its nail.

You remember how trembling and pale

---

His hand, like the death-bark's quivering sail,  
When he hung it there last and unmurmuring passed  
From his work to his home on the hill.

"Drape the hand-press, boys, with crape for its friend.  
Put a knot on the lever

He pulled, for it never  
Will feel such a hand as his was forever.  
And all that was his leave just as it is

Till we see in the graveyard the end.

"From Slug Six learn we lessons of living,

That when we shall hear

"Time" called in our ear

By a voice we must heed, we may quit with good cheer.

May our takes be all done, galleys ready to run,

And our strings like long streamers float fair in the sun

As we fly to the desk where he is now gone

And the Foreman his credit is giving.

---

AUGUST 8th, 1885.

The Nations great heart is opprest,

As she bends o'er the form of her dead,

And lays him to peacefully rest

---

With the dust of the brave ones he led—  
With the brave ones that followed where glory  
Beckoned over the battlefield gory.

The prairies spread broad in the west,  
The ocean-washed rocks of the east,  
The south with its sunny skies blest—  
Each fears lest its tribute is least:  
Each lays on his coffin of glory  
The wreath that tells its heart's story.

The Gray clasps the hand of the Blue  
With eyes dimmed with gratitude's tears  
For the generous heart that it knew,  
When it bent to the Fate of the years;  
Clasps hands 'neath the emblem of glory—  
The banner untorn—'tis his story.

The cannons boom out their salute,  
The crowds in death-silence uncover,  
As by them the train dark and mute  
Glides 'neath the storm-clouds as they hover\*  
And loud the hills echo the story  
When the thunders tell to them his glory.

\* The day of Gen. Grant's funeral was a dark and stormy one.



---

The hero's last journey is ended;  
Sweet be his rest in the tomb;  
The prayers of all peoples are blended  
Where love for the great can find room—  
And ever they'll dwell on the story  
Of the soldier who sought not his glory.

Bow down with our faces in dust:  
Bow down, and forgive the mistaken;  
For the sword shall consume with red rust,  
And the Union no more shall be shaken—  
And the young men shall sing of his glory  
When the dying shall tell them his story

BENEDICTION.

And now,  
To Thee, Oh God,  
We bow;  
And 'neath the sod  
We lay him low,  
Where sun and snow  
May cause the flowers of peace to grow.

---

## SONGS OF LIFE.

---

### CHILDHOOD.

Life is long and all before us—

Let us laugh, then, while we may;  
Now the sun shines brightly o'er us,  
And the world's a summer day.

Merrily, merrily,  
Will we sing our song,  
"Full of glee let us be  
As we float along."

---

### YOUTH.

Childhood's years will fall behind us,  
Then our happiest hours will cease;  
But the world's great doers all remind us,  
"Lives of duty are lives of peace."

Cheerily, cheerily,  
Join us in the song,  
"Willingly and smilingly  
Row our boat along."

---

MANHOOD.

The noon-tide glory's now around us;  
Wield the hammer while we may;  
Shape the lives that now surround us,  
For the forge will cool for aye.

Ceaselessly, ceaselessly,  
Let the anvil ring;  
"Fearlessly and earnestly"  
Is the song I sing."

---

AGE.

From the toils of earth we've freed us,  
And its sorrows haunt no more;  
Soon the Silent Hand will lead us  
To the mystic further shore.

Trustingly, trustingly,  
Will we wait the call;  
Resting in the mercy  
That Heaven shows to all.

---

## DIONYSIUS.

The tyrant's eyes scarce close in sleep;  
Suspicion is his breath of life;  
His confidence in no one is reposed,  
And hatred of his kind his guiding star.  
In secret, countless mourners weep  
The death of near and dear.  
His walks are guarded round  
With every device genius can contrive.  
His couch is unapproachable,  
Deep chasmed round, and bridged from the bed-side.  
His food he tastes not till  
The bearer eats of every dish.  
Woe the man his eye unfavorable  
Rests upon. Death lurks in his gaze.  
With short delay to spring.  
And thus it fell one day  
Upon a soldier, young and fair and brave,  
With wife and babes that on his shoulders hung,  
And kissed his brow and played  
With his abundant locks that fell  
Careless round his neck and swinging

---

Dallied with the wind.  
He of his strength was proud;  
And oft he'd stretch his sinewy arm  
At length and dance his prattling boy  
Upon his palm. Whose mother, proud  
Of both, would look with love on each,  
Rejoicing that SHE would have a son  
Whose deeds of arms might in the years to come  
Fill every mouth with praise—  
Good-natured Damon, free from care,  
And rich in his own rural home  
With trees for shade and fruit,  
And dimpling springs to lave the heated brow,  
And Pythias, serious-faced and calm,  
With eyes that shone with semi-melancholy,  
And words that fell into the poet's phrase,  
Was his friend and comrade—  
But when the battle's fury rose  
And Glory stalked like some celestial shade  
Upon the field before, then Pythias' sword  
Clave like the lightning's flash,  
And none dare stand before

The breathless quickness of his iron nerves.  
At high sun Damon's doom is named.  
"Ere falls the day below yon ocean's rim,  
Tell me that Damon lives no more--  
Till then, the dungeon." Thus the tyrant speaks.  
"My wife and babes, oh King, but one brief word  
Of farewell to soothe the hearts this day will break."  
"It cannot be." "I am content to die,  
But oh, to kill the innocent with death of one they love  
Is cruelty too much refined. But one last word  
Of parting and I will return."  
"How know I that? I trust no man."  
Then with a light uncommon seen  
In eyes of men beaming from his,  
Spake Pythias: "But grant, great King,  
The prayer of Damon that he go to bid  
Farewell to those he loves, and I will take  
His place till even, when he will return  
To die as thou hast just decreed,  
Or I for him will forfeit my dear life.  
The gods will prosper you, and all the earth  
Shall laud your acts to heaven."

“What? trust you thus  
In Friendship’s name? I trust it not.  
It is a myth that dwells but in the brains  
Of poets. Yet to prove that I am true,  
Your prayer I grant. But you, fair youth,  
Shall prove your folly with your blood—  
The chains and dungeon till the red sun sinks.”  
The clanking links resound.  
Pythias, with weighted limbs,  
Is led away. But Damon tarries not;  
At home, strives vain to calm the flood  
Of deep, strong feeling whose fountains broken up  
Rush over all their bounds.  
The hour of parting, hopeless and forever,  
Has come. One long fond clasp is given  
To swooning wife and wondering boys  
That cry, “Goodbye,” as with a groan he’s gone.  
The sun above the ocean’s rim  
Hangs low. One short half hour’s time  
Is yet to pass before the fatal block  
Shall reek with Pythias’ blood. But still  
He murmurs, “Damon will not fail.

Some mischance holds him late.”  
Yet comes he not. And now the noisy crowd  
More boisterous grows, and cries  
“Bring on the chained prisoner. Bring on  
The man that trusts his friend to death.  
Ha! Ha!”  
Then sound above them all the tyrant’s words:  
“Bring out the self condemned. Bring out  
The man whose friend now laughs  
In some retreat safe hid at what he’s gained,  
And what his friend, the fool, hath lost.  
I prove my saying true, that Friendship lives  
But in the minds of poets and of fools.”  
So Pythias is led forth, pale but with a light  
In his dark, full eye that awes to silence  
That motley crowd. With proud and firm footstep  
He treads the fated path that leads up to the block.  
The evening wind the raven ringlets gently shake  
From his broad, white brow, and at its kiss  
He smiles; and meeting now by chance  
The tear-dimmed eye of a friend of both,  
Whose heaving breast tells of woe unspeakable,



In firm, clear tones he shouts aloud,  
"To die for those we love is sweet!"  
'Mid awful hush the block is reached.  
Clear cut against the evening sky  
The soldier's statue-form stands out.  
The color glows again upon his cheek.  
His dark eye sweeps the heavens' vault,  
The ocean's rim, the distant purple hills,  
And loving looks upon the low hung sun  
As what it ne'er shall rest upon again.  
The headsman feels his axe's edge  
If it be keen, and leans upon its helve.  
The attendants wait the signal look  
To bind him to the fatal wood.

Day's pulse hath scarce a dozen beats,  
And Pythias' life must cease with its.  
The great crowd's every nerve is tense,  
Its breath suppressed, and pallor creeps  
Upon its face; for ne'er before was seen  
So noble death in so noble cause.  
But list! A glad but breath-spent cry  
Is heard far out upon the straggling verge

Of this vast human sea. A whisper-wave sweeps in,  
Coursing toward its center; and ere it reach  
The station of the king 'tis swelled into a roar  
Like to a storm's wild voice: "He comes! He comes!  
"Pythias is saved, and Friendship lives!"  
The mighty concourse surges like ocean 'neath the wind  
While Damon, faint with leagues of running,  
Is borne above and hurried hand from hand  
Toward the station of the tyrant, seated high.  
But first to Pythias' feet. He kneels  
And clasps his knees and blesses him with tears,  
Then stands erect and speaks:  
"Oh King, the gods forever prosper you for this.  
Now speed the stroke, for see, the sun hath sunk  
This moment from the world."  
But Dionysius stands with upraised hand,  
And silence falls profound on all.  
"Cast off the chains from Pythias. Both shall live.  
I know by proof that Friendship is,  
And ask these two to make of me a third  
In their fast bond of love that smiles at death  
And bids me do my worst."

LINES TO E——

Away among life's rugged hills  
A little lakelet 's sleeping,  
Whose deep blue waters have so much  
Our happiness in keeping.  
'T is Friendship's lake. The lilies girt  
Its pebbly shore, while spreading  
Above it on the swaying boughs  
Are wild vines, fragrance shedding.  
And o'er it bends the changeful sky  
In threatening or smiling,  
Today the heart of sighs and tears,  
Tomorrow, joys, beguiling.  
Sometimes unbalanced elements,  
In raging tempests breaking,  
Upstir its very sands and set  
Its gentle heart a-quaking.  
But when the storm has passed away  
And skies again are azure,  
We sometimes see within its depths  
A rarer, purer treasure.

For deep in every human heart  
Some hidden gem is lying  
That life's rude gales may bring to light  
When nature's strength they 're trying.  
Shine out, fair sun, and let your beams  
Pierce deep this lakelet sleeping,  
And show what pearls of happiness  
Its depths may have in keeping.

---

MEXICAN GIRL'S LAMENT FOR HER  
MURDERED LOVER.

Heart of mine, oh heart of mine,  
Long in thy darkened cell repine!  
Thy love lies low in the cruel grave.  
In vain, in vain, in vain you plead  
At Death's closed door—he will not heed.  
Where was the power of God to save  
Thy love, my heart, from the cruel grave?  
Oh heart of mine!  
Love of mine, oh love of mine,  
All heaven's years my heart is thine!  
Thy face is hid 'neath the senseless stone.

---

Oh heart so brave and form so fair,  
'T was murder's hand that laid thee there.  
God did not call thee, yet thou 'rt gone—  
Thy face is hid 'neath the senseless stone,  
    Oh love of mine!

---

A-WING.

Oh sweet and free  
Of wing to me  
The muses sometimes come and we  
Speed swift away to realms afar  
    To roam in blest ethereal fields  
That lie beyond the evening star,  
    Whose flora richest perfume yields.  
  
There viewless flowers  
In unseen bowers  
Breathe fragrance all th' unmeasured hours;  
For time no cycles there doth run,  
    But an eternal golden light  
Falls trembling from one central sun  
    That moveless rests at zenith height.

These fields of mind  
Leave all behind  
Of Earth's drear walk, with thorns confined  
Between two narrow, devious walls,  
With clouds above and flint beneath,  
While round misfortune's shadow falls,  
Joy's tomb behind, before us death.

Doth there not lie  
Beneath the sky  
Some land like this to which I fly  
In moments when the spirit sinks  
O'erwhelmed by stroke of cruel fate?  
Wherein the generous soul ne'er drinks  
The cup prepared of mortal hate?

Unknown to me  
Such land may be—  
Some islet girt by peaceful sea  
Where Fortune's hands with treasures gleam  
That he who labors may obtain—  
Where life may be a poet's dream,  
A dream that wakes not into pain.

Ah, Hope, fair one  
Who still dost run  
And beckon me to follow on,  
How far I've followed you, foot-sore!  
How far must follow yet ere you  
Vouchsafe to touch the rosy doer  
That shuts your promised state from view!  
Again a state  
Whereon doth wait  
Fair Truth, with Justice for her mate;  
Where good is of more worth than gold;  
Ambition is not to destroy;  
Where Friendship every hand doth hold,  
And mind and heart find sweet employ.

---

LOVE GUARDS ME, ABSENT.

Thy face I see not, dearest,  
Yet know that thou art near  
When life to me seems drearest,  
Whispering words of cheer.  
Thy spirit flies to meet me—  
Love's wings are swift as light—

---

And mine goes forth to greet thee  
Beyond the shades of night.

Sweet one, thine arms uphold me  
Oft on these treacherous sands.  
When darkness' depths enfold me  
I clasp thine outstretched hands.

My child! Thine eyes are beaming  
With lovelight on me now:  
While waking I sit dreaming  
Thy fingers soothe my brow.

---

#### VIA IN ITALIAM.

When on life's pathway sorrows rise  
Like mountains lifting to the skies;  
When hope eludes the mist-dimmed eyes,  
And vanishes the promised prize;  
Remember then Italia lies  
Beyond the Alps.

If ye would see her templed hills,  
Her vine-clad slopes and silvery rills,  
Where ancient glory dwelt that fills



Th' imagination yet and thrills  
The quickened pulses, bear the ills  
And cross the Alps.

---

### TOTTY BROWN AND DOTTY GREEN.

Totty Brown and Dotty Green,  
(Their lawns without a fence between,)  
Where tall elms and maples throw  
Upon the grateful sward below  
A checkered, shifting come-and-go  
Of light and shadow, to and fro  
Moving as the branches sway  
To the whimsic breezes, play  
Together all the summer day.

Totty is two years the older.  
Dotty's crown is at his shoulder  
When they 're standing side by side,  
And I see him look with pride  
O'er her straw hat's ample brim  
When she stands in front of him.  
He is stalwart, tanned of face;  
Hers a form of supple grace,

Lissome as a brookside willow  
Bending o'er the mimic billow.  
With a spirit never quiet,  
In him mirth runs ceaseless riot.  
He from Joy's full chalice drinking  
Turns sometimes to graver thinking—  
Of things beyond the grasp of men,  
But clear to childhood's subtler ken.  
She 's a maid of serious mind,  
A baby-woman sweet and kind,  
And demurely sits the while  
Watching him with sunny smile  
Till he, wearied with his racing,  
Throws him at her side and placing  
His curly head upon her knees,  
Looks upward through the spreading trees  
And asks, "Do you think God can see  
As little things as you an' me  
When he's so far off in the sky?  
I can 't see him, he 's up so high."  
And Dotty answers solemnly,  
"W'y Totty B'own! "Course he can see

Us bofe, an' littler sings 'an we.  
I knows it 'cause my mamma say  
He watch us all 'e time we play,  
An' watches all 'e birdies too."  
No doubt shines from those eyes so blue  
That earnestly in his look down,  
Reproving with a gentle frown.  
Ah, love and faith with woman's life  
Come to her: man hath doubt and strife.

No sweeter children e'er I 've seen  
Than Totty Brown and Dotty Green.  
But silently fly childhood's days,  
And with them vanish childish ways.  
Again I see them on the lawn,  
But not as in the days agoe.  
'T is summer's dusk. On tree and wall  
Night's curtains slowly, softly fall.  
She sits upon a rustic seat,  
He on the greensward at her feet.  
His dark eyes raised hers falling meet,  
And lovers' words his lips repeat:  
"Dora, knowing what 't would say,

---

Give answer to my heart today.”  
With glow of rose upon her cheek,  
“Dear Tom, no need that I should speak,  
She says, “for you must long have known  
That Dotty’s heart is all your own—  
Or in your breast still lives there doubt,  
As long ago?” “It is cast out  
By perfect love, and Truth I trust  
Through you. To God I will be just,  
Who has to woman’s heart revealed  
What from man’s mind may lie concealed.  
Love is too sweet a child for earth,  
It can but be of heavenly birth,”  
He says with earnestness. They rise  
And walk while Night relumes her skies,  
And gossip leaves the zephyrs tell  
The story never old. Ah, well  
The story ’s known to every breeze  
That steals in summer ’mong the trees.  
Tom still is taller by a head,

A stalwart man with sun-tanned face  
And bearded lip and fearless tread;

---

And she has all her girlish grace.

I look upon them as they go.

My heart is lighter for the sight.

I whisper "Would that they might know  
Alway the bliss that 's theirs tonight."

---

IN LIGHTER VEIN.

---

## THEORY AND PRACTICE.

Brains and modesty in man  
Fair praise receive from all;  
But when we call at Fortune's door  
The hand-out goes to gall.

---

## THE POLITICIAN'S PLAINT.

Heaven lies about us in our infancy, we 're told.  
Fond women call us handsome when we 're uglier  
than sin.  
But when we 've grown to voters and fat offices would  
hold,  
Oh, 't is then the world around us gets its fine work in.

---

## MISUNDERSTOOD.

"I 've something here," the lank man said,  
"That will please your taste, I think."  
But the editor did not raise his head,  
For he busily slung the ink.  
"A few nice pomes," the visitor quoth,  
"With the freshness of fragrant trees"—

---

The editor muttered a fearful oath—

“Mellow as an evening breeze.”

“We can ’t use po’ms,” the editor saith.

On his broad brow deepened the scowl.

The lank one turned as pale as death,

For he heard the bulldog growl.

And he fled straightway. His basket fell

Right down by the editor’s chair,

While the red-ripe apples rolled pell-mell

On the bare floor everywhere.

---

#### AD ASTRA PER ASPERA.

He came to Kansas when the state was young,

And he likewise was in the dew of youth.

Enthusiasm loosed and moved his tongue,

And he sang high of duty and of truth.

The years rolled on, and there ripened in him

A laudable ambition to arise

Above the petty things that sought to win him,

And write his name in gold upon the skies.

But hard the struggle was, and youth was flown,

Yet did his name not blaze among the stars.



---

Sorrow settled on his heart, a mighty stone,  
And on his brow were disappointment's scars.

He sadly sighed, "A humbler name I'll make—  
A name that shall be known upon the earth.  
In life's great game I'll win a minor stake—  
Not all in vain shall have been my birth."

The steak he won. He made the name more humble,  
And now 's beyond life's promise or its menace.  
Within the cemetery upon the name you'll stumble—  
'T is on a wooden headboard and is "Denis."

---

### FATE OF A KANSAS TERROR.

He was a western terror, and he tho't to have some fun  
By getting on a merry whizz and taking in the town.  
Like a burnished copper steeple in a setting summer sun  
Shone his nose upon the quiet streets he swaggered  
up and down.

But the citizens descried  
Him and got on the inside,  
And they left a margin wide  
For this terror on a toot to bravely tread.

Yes, he swaggered up and down, he looked fierce and  
loudly swore,

“I ’m a roarer from the land of blood and bones,  
And nary cuss I care for the riverlets of gore  
That ’ll wash the dust from off these here drouthy  
Kansas stones.

So come out if you dare,  
And I ’ll promptly fill the air  
With a cloud of bloody hair,  
And I ’ll turn your carcasses into payin’ mines o’ lead.  
But the people all stayed in, and they barred the outside  
doors

And peeped out of the weathershakes up in the attic  
loft,  
Or fled to cyclone cellars like when the storm-wind roars,  
Or the playful western zephyr does the superstruct-  
ures waft.

So he strode the silent street  
While the spurs upon his feet  
His advance and his retreat  
Told to the cringing inmates of the houses that he passed.

"I 'm a terror as I told you, and I 'll eat you on my bread.  
I 'll do your ticky village and your curdled blood I 'll  
spill.

I 'll drink your fire-water till my nose is cherry red,  
And your sickly cemetery I 'll most assuredly fill.

But I did n't come to talk,  
So crawl if you can 't walk,  
And toe this line of chalk,

And gaze upon the setting sun, for it 'll be your last.

He ceased, and in the center of the wooden sidewalk drew  
From one end of the block to about its middle plank  
A line of ghastly white, and he would have drawn it  
through,

But his after life terrestrial was made a sudden blank.

From the pocket at his hip  
There waved the flashy tip  
Of a red bandana, slip-

Ping further out as on his stooping way he went.

And just across the street, in a livery stable stall,

A billy-goat was feeding on loose hay from out a rack—  
And men came out with hoes and scraped the terror off  
the wall

And put his pulpy remnants in a little paper sack.  
Then without dissenting vote  
They gave that billy-goat  
A new twenty-dollar note,  
Which he munched as slowly back to the hay his steps  
he bent.

---

### CHRISTMAS IN DARKTOWN.

Crismus comes, evah niggah knows,  
But once a yeah, an' away hit goes.  
Nen hab a good time while hit last—  
Dinah move aroun' putty tolable fast.  
Possum good and tatehs too,  
Little pig roast an' chicken stew,  
Tuhkey stuffed—oh, g' long away,  
Yallah gal yaint nowhah today!

Gib me dat banjo, Sambo,  
Sambo, gib me dat banjo.  
I 'll play while Dinah spreads de clof—  
Tum-tiddy-tiddy tum—rake hit off!  
Hiyi! Whoopee! See him dance  
Twell 'e shake de buttons all offen 'is pants!

Look dah now at Singlefoot Joe  
Pattin' 'is wooden laig on de flooh—  
Now 'e's a dancin'—haw! haw! haw!  
Jes beats all dis niggah evah saw—  
Ef dah yaint Dinah ginnin' to swing,  
An' she wuz a gran'ma way las' spring!

Lay down, banjo,

Lay jes so—

Doan mek fun o' me,

Wooden-laig Joe—

Right han' across an' suhkle roun',  
Left han' back an' all rake down.  
Rappy-tappy-patty-pat, scrape an' wheel—  
Lawd know how to mek a niggah's heel.  
All promenade an' to yoh seats,  
An' I 'll say grace foh dese heah meats.

---

### SORTER BIOGRAPHICAL.

He was born in Arkansaw,  
In a sorter quiet spot,  
And he always stayed about  
Where at first he'd sorter got

A norry glimpse of mother earth.  
The flint hills of his place of birth.

He was a sorter lazy youth,  
And he sorter pottered round  
The farm, and with a shovel plow  
In summer sorter vexed the ground,  
And he raised a patch of corn,  
Though it sorter looked forlorn.

With the years he sorter grew  
To a cracker lank and tall,  
Dressed in home-spun yaller jeans.

But he sorter had no "sprawl,"  
Or no git-up, as they say  
In the state of Ioway.

He married, and then sorter lived  
On bacon from the razor back,  
Corn pone and punkin stew, and raised  
Of ganglin' boys and gals no lack.  
They tapered down from six feet high  
To the sugar-trough and lullaby.

---

As the years rolled slowly o'er  
His head, his hair got sorter thin.  
And he sorter shed his teeth,  
And his leathery cheeks caved in.  
Down time's steep he 'gan to slide,  
And at last he sorter died.

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